

STANFORD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD

More than a half century's association between Stanford and the Reserve Officers Training Corps will come to a close June 16, when 14 undergraduates receive their armed forces commissions.

More than 2,000 Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine officers have been commissioned at the University, including several Rhodes scholars and Danforth fellows, and hundreds who completed advanced graduate work.

The ROTC commissioning will be held at Moffett Field Naval Air Station, where they have been scheduled since the ceremonies became a focal point for anti-war protests in the late 1960's.

Provost William F. Miller will speak on behalf of the University, with Major General James J. Gibbons, deputy commander of the Sixth Army (Presidio) and Rear Admiral C.J. Van Arsdale Jr., commandant of the 12th Naval District welcoming seven Navy ensigns, two Marine and five Army lieutenants.

Ten Navy ROTC undergraduates, who already have completed all their Navy requirements, will remain at Stanford but will be administered through the UC Berkeley Navy ROTC unit. This group already was enrolled in Navy ROTC as freshmen when it was ordered phased out.

The Army has commissioned 1,063 men at Stanford since coming to campus in 1919, when post World War I cadets trained with horse-drawn artillery.

Navy and Marine ROTC have been on campus since 1946, commissioning 1,019 officers in that time.

As the Vietnam war escalated, ROTC enrollment at Stanford dropped sharply. Where 586 were enrolled in 1963-64, 346 were enrolled in the fall of 1968 and only 250 the following year. Low enrollments were cited by the Air Force in its decision to withdraw from the University two years ago.

In February 1969 the Faculty Senate voted 25-8 to end academic credit for ROTC courses, a position upheld in a 403-356 vote of the Academic Council later that year. Efforts to work out a compromise program faltered and on June 4, 1970, a few days after the Cambodian invasion, the Senate voted 26-8 with three abstentions, to bar future enrollment of new students in ROTC, a position also upheld by the full Council.

At the same time, the Senate expressed its support for off campus officer training programs (such as those offered Marine platoon leaders), where students can receive military training concurrently with regular academic instruction.

(At a Faculty Senate meeting Thursday, May 31, it was reported that 150 students had signed a petition asking the University to reopen negotiations with the Department of Defense along these lines.

(Because of the short time remaining in the current academic year, the 1972-73 Senate Steering Committee has referred the petition to the 1973-74 Steering Committee.)

Stanford was one of the 17 colleges and universities to sever ties with ROTC. Others included Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Penn, and Pomona. Princeton recently voted to reinstate Army ROTC.

"Stanford was the only institution west of Philadelphia and the only one of the Pacific Eight Conference to do so," with Navy ROTC, according to Major Henry Stackpole, USMC, commander of the Navy-Marine Corps unit at Stanford. "But the Navy may possibly reduce others anyway, due to budgetary considerations."

"The quarrel at Stanford," he recalls, "was mainly over the academic status of the ROTC programs and military instructors. The Army was more flexible about it than we were," agreeing at one point to submit courses for faculty approval for academic credit.

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This sentiment was echoed by Col. M.J. Asensio, Jr., commander of the Army ROTC detachment. "We have enjoyed a personal acceptance here. Stanford has always treated us with appropriate decorum and the amenities worthy of a great university. Our programs however, were not as closely scrutinized as were those of the other ROTC programs," he said.

Removal of ROTC, in Maj. Stackpole's view, was the result of a "bad emotional climate—the Vietnam war, Cambodia, Laos, and Kent State."

"We wound up in a situation where 100 Stanford student midshipmen and seven military faculty were the focal point for the hate and frustration of some of the faculty and student body," he said. "And the campus referendums on the subject were inconclusive and ambiguous." (One 1970 poll showed an almost even three-way split among those students wanting no ROTC, those favoring it as a voluntary student organization, and those supporting official status for ROTC.)

"But there's one important point," he added. "Stanford was the only school where the decision to remove ROTC was made by the faculty—at all the other schools, the decision was student-initiated."

"As we see it," Stackpole said, "100 students per year will be hurt financially by the phase-out. You have to remember that these young men had to be admitted to Stanford before they could get into ROTC—so that we're losing talented students who otherwise couldn't have gone here without ROTC scholarship support."

Asensio feels the same way. "I hate to see such a combination of opportunities for Stanford students disappear," he said. "The ROTC students were eligible for four, three, two or one year post-graduate scholarships with active duty commitments often delayed to permit immediate graduate study."

"We wanted purely military courses taught by the military," he said, "but we encouraged students to select appropriate Stanford courses for certain ROTC requirements."

"We are intensely proud of the varied accomplishments of our students who have demonstrated the compatibility of the best of military ideals and Stanford academic excellence."

When the military units are officially dissolved June 30, Stackpole will report to Okinawa to work with a Marine infantry unit. Asensio has been assigned to the staff and faculty of the School of The Americas in Panama.

Capt. Carl Oliver, commander of the Air Force ROTC detachment, left the campus in June 1971. His was the first unit to terminate Stanford connections. The few students remaining in AFROTC have been under the command of California State University, San Jose, detachment.

Cadet honors this year went to Thomas G. Kyle of Hawaii in naval science and to John Q. Anderson of Newberg, Ore., John F. Champagne Jr., of Menlo Park, and Frank Mihlon III of Belmar, N.J., in military science.

Kyle, a top civil engineering student, has been assigned to postgraduate work in nuclear engineering.

Anderson, captain of the Stanford track team for two years, was an outstanding sprinter and hurdler. He twice won the Army's Walter Award and the Society of American Military Engineers Award. He will attend Harvard Graduate School of Business after service with the Army Engineers.

Champagne, who is receiving a joint bachelor's degree in economics and a master's in applied earth sciences, received the National Defense Transportation Act Award.

Mihlon, a chemical engineer, was in the top five percent nationally of all ROTC cadets. He has received an Army fellowship for study in business administration prior to going to duty.